

Someone to Call Home by justareader1120

Series: [Prompt Requests \[1\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M, I guess I'm not just a reader anymore ha, but it has a heart warming ending no worries, just thought i'd post it here, this got super angsty if anyone is into that

Language: English

Characters: Eleven (Stranger Things), Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Will Byers, these three are only mentioned tho

Relationships: Eleven/Mike Wheeler

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Summary:

Based on a requested prompt "Stop hiding from me. I just want to help you can't you see that?"

Mike's been distant, El just wants to understand why

Someone to Call Home

Author's Note:

angst is so fun to write!

No one ever had to know how El was truly feeling if she didn't want them to. She had become an expert at shutting people out, using her neutral expression as a curtain to spare others from the dark abyss of her pain and anguish.

But Mike Wheeler? Well he was an open book. From the smallest twitch of his eyebrow, to the way a smile would slowly but surely spread on his face from ear to ear, El Hopper knew Mike Wheeler like the back of her hand.

It's what prompted her to notice that day by day and breath by breath, Mike was pulling away.

It was their sophomore year at Hawkins High and the party usually found themselves in a secluded area of the cafeteria during their lunch break. It was supposed to be all six of them, but El only counted four other heads upon reaching the table.

Taking her seat across from Lucas and next to Max, El questioned everyone about the freckled boy's whereabouts.

"I'm not sure," Lucas piped up. "I think he said he had to study for some test later today."

A test? Mike wasn't one to skip out on the small break they all always longed for during the day, so she figured it had to have been last minute or something.

Right?

It was later that night that El realized the sudden change in Mike's mannerisms over the past few weeks. He'd been hiding the smile El's heart flipped over and she couldn't remember the last time she had seen the classic Mike Wheeler sparkle he always had in his eye for her.

Before she knew it she was dialing the number she had begun memorizing the minute she learned it, and the familiar sound of Mike's voice flooded the line.

"H-Hello?"

"Mike! I didn't see you at lunch or... the rest of today for that matter. Is something wrong? Are you sick or something?" El said with a slight laugh. She knew that Mike never handled being sick well, acting quite dramatic at even the slightest cough.

"I could be dying, El!"

"It's just a cold, Mike."

But even then, there was a lightness in his tone that wasn't there.

"Yeah, yeah I'm fine I just... had a headache and couldn't stay."

"Oh. Well is there anything I can do?"

No! No, really El I'm fine, seriously I-I'll be okay. Listen I have to go, I'll talk to you tomorrow okay? I love you."

"Okay Mike I—" the phone disconnects before El can even let out a "love you more".

The next day is the same stream of questions and lack of answers, until Will informs her that Mike managed to show up for the last class they share. "But he was kind of in a rush, so I would hurry if I were you."

Spotting him retrieving his bike from the racks, El rushed over with an excited and relieved "Mike!"

She thinks that she sees a ghost of a smile pass his features, but it is gone as soon as it appears. It's then that she can finally take in his frame; dark circles under his eyes, hair slightly disheveled, *have his eyes always been this red?*

"El, I-I'm sorry I have to go."

"Mike, wait," He still wouldn't look her in the eye.

“Are you okay? You seem kind of distant lately.”

“I’m fine El, I just- I can’t talk right now.”

“Friends don’t lie.” Her reminder rang.

“I’m not lying!” Mike snapped, and El flinched at the sudden increase of volume. “I-I’m sorry I just can’t talk, not right now.”

“Please,” El tugged on the sleeve of his sweater.

“If it’s something that’s bothering you I-I can—“

“You can what, El?! You can’t change this or fix it so just leave me alone,”

Fix it? Fix what?

“Fix what?!” But she didn’t get an answer, Mike was already walking back towards his bike.

El had *enough* of him pulling away from her.

“Stop hiding from me! I just want to help you can’t you see that?!” Tears were already falling freely from her eyes accompanying the desperate hitch in her voice.

“My dad left, El! Okay? Is that what you wanted?!” His voice softens as tears begin to cloud his eyes. “A-and you can’t help me so please... let me go.”

He’s gone before she can even protest.

El had never been more appreciative of the bike that Hopper gifted her with months ago than at that very moment.

She sped down the bike line and past the cars and shops of downtown Hawkins to make her way to Maple Street, heart beating out of her chest and her mind wiring and rewiring what she would say to Mike to keep him from turning her away.

El never got the chance to get to know Ted Wheeler, only knowing him for being notoriously distant and hollow toward his wife and children. She would have to put aside her anger over a man abandoning such a beautiful family for another time. *Maybe I can find him and toss a boulder at his head.*

The thought of the only boy she's ever loved hurting only prompted her legs to pump the pedals faster. To get to the boy who looked at her with more love and genuine awe in his eyes than anyone she's ever known. The one who saved her when she was a timid child, with nothing and no one.

And she would be damned if he didn't know how much he meant to her.

Despite her hair for sure being windswept, her face flushed, and her breathing heavy she knocked as timidly as she always did on Mike's basement door.

She was met with the same sullen eyes she confronted in the parking lot, the guilt in them much more prominent.

"El I—"

"Wait please I... I just wanted to say something if you'll let me."

Mike only nodded slightly, and El took that as her cue to continue.

"Mike I... I love you more than I've ever loved anyone. You don't have to hide yourself from me. I want to help you even if I know I can't. You might feel like your home is broken but... y-you're my home, and I want to be yours, but I can't be that if you aren't honest with me."

As subtle as it was, the light that returned to the freckled boy's eyes were enough for El to drown into.

It was a light that was gone for far too long.

Author's Note:

im @lets-engage on tumblr if anyone wants to chat!